



California  
Department of  
Health Services

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TO: Infection Control Practitioners  
Hospital Administrators  
Cardiovascular Surgery Departments  
Pharmacies

Subject: Possible Contamination of Magnesium Sulfate for Cardiovascular Surgery.

This notice is from the California Department of Health Services (CDHS), Division of Communicable Disease Control (CDCDC) and the Licensing and Certification (L&C) Program. We have learned from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of possible contamination with *Serratia marcescens* of magnesium sulfate in 5% dextrose, from Pharmedium Services, for administration to cardiovascular surgery patients. In an outbreak of *Serratia marcescens* bacteremia in cardiovascular surgery patients in a New Jersey hospital this week, [the New Jersey Department of Health and Human Services](#) cultured *Serratia marcescens* from an unopened bag of 50ml (piggyback) IV solution with 1 gram of magnesium sulfate in 5% dextrose and water (Lot # [100504900049](#), expiration April 4, 2005) manufactured by Pharmedium Services, Houston, Texas. In an earlier outbreak in a California hospital, in January 2005, *Serratia marcescens* bacteremia occurred in cardiovascular surgery patients who received intravenous magnesium sulfate from different lots (and possibly different concentrations of magnesium sulfate) manufactured by Pharmedium. It is unknown at this time whether other lots of this product are contaminated. Also at this time we know of no evidence of contamination of magnesium sulfate products used for other indications or infections in patients other than cardiovascular surgery. Pharmedium provides pharmaceutical products to hospitals nationwide; additional testing from the same and other product lots are underway to determine the extent of possible contamination. At this time Pharmedium has not issued a product recall.

If you are aware of cases of *S. marcescens* bacteremia occurring during or shortly after administration of this product you should immediately contact your local health department or the Department of Health Services at (510) 540-2566. If you identify any magnesium sulfate solution of Lot # 100504900049 from Pharmedium Services, isolate the bags and notify the Department of Health Services.

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